

CAPTAIN JIMMY'S CHRISTMAS

By FRANCES YALE

CAPTAIN Jimmy Smith lived in a funny little house down on the beach. Once it had been the cabin of his old schooner, Skimmer; now it was the only home Captain Jimmy and his cat Vixen had.

In the summer time he sold fish and clams and lobsters to the summer cottagers, but in the winter he had hard work to keep the little cabin warm and find food for himself and Vixen.

It was the day before Christmas, and the beach was rough with ice.

"Snow!" said Captain Jimmy, as he left his little house and went up toward the village. His pipe was between his teeth, but he was not smoking—he was out of tobacco.

He smiled sadly because he knew that he would have a lonely Christmas. He had no wife or children, and he was very much alone. The poor are often forgotten.

By the time Captain Jimmy had bought some flour and salt pork and a little coffee it was dark and snowing fast. So when he heard the sound of children crying he stopped in surprise.

"Hullo!" shouted Captain Jimmy, and the crying stopped at once. In another minute he almost tumbled over two little children who were running along the beach path.

"Heave ho!" called Captain Jimmy, and he put out a long arm and gathered the little ones close to him. "What are you doing here?" he shouted, for the wind was screaming now.

They tried to explain, but Captain Jimmy couldn't understand a word they said, they cried so much, and at last, half drugging, half carrying them, he hurried them into the warm little cabin where he lived.

When the kerosene lamp was lighted the two children stopped crying and smiled at Captain Jimmy.

"Are you Thanta Claus?" one lisped, and the other little girl, who looked exactly like her, giggled and clung to Captain Jimmy's big hand.

"I love oo, Mistor Thanta Claus," she whispered.

"Bless your sweet hearts," cried Captain Jimmy, his eyes full of tears. "I guess I'll have to be Santa Claus tonight! I can never get you home tonight in this howling blizzard!"

The two little girls smiled brightly and took off their red cloaks and knitted caps and leggings and rubbers.

"We're lost," said one of the twins, and she told a long story of how they had gone to walk with nurse, who had suddenly run away and left them in the woods. "We hollered, but she wouldn't come back," said Linnie sadly. "My mamma scolded her this afternoon."

"What are your names? Where do you live?" asked Captain Jimmy as he pushed them up to the table before two great bowls of bread and milk.

"Brown? Goodness me, I never heard of any Browns over to the Point! You'll have to stay here till morning!"

"Will Thanta Claus come here?" asked Linnie.

"He's got to!" said Captain Jimmy. By and by after the twins had said their prayers and were sound asleep on Captain Jimmy's bed while Vixen purred at their feet, Captain Jimmy walked the floor and whistled a tune.

"I reckon that Santa Claus could never get down my little stove pipe!" he chuckled. "so I'll just have to fill those two little stockings myself!"

Sometime afterward a number of people hurried through the snow and peered into Captain Jimmy's window. What did they see? Why, just Captain Jimmy, with his empty pipe between his teeth, holding two little stockings in his hands.

Suddenly he began to take things off the mantelpiece and put them into the stockings. They were things that Captain Jimmy loved—they were all that he had—bits of coral and pretty shells from far countries, some odd wooden toys he had played with when he was a child and two red apples.

Just as he was hanging the stockings on the edge of the shelf the door burst open and some people rushed in and began to hug him and question him, and they all talked at once. They proved to be the father and mother and uncles and aunts of the lost twins, and they were so grateful to Captain Jimmy for his kindness to the twins that they insisted on taking him home with them to spend Christmas.

And Vixen, the cat, went along too, and the stockings which Captain Jimmy had filled.

Mr. Brown engaged Captain Jimmy to be captain of his yacht, and Captain Jimmy smoked his pipe and said it was his happiest Christmas.

"CHRIST'S POOR" AT CHRISTMAS.

One of the sweetest of all the Christmas superstitions is prevalent in parts of Germany.

Long ago a poor little clock-maker who loved above all things to go to church received a Christmas gift of a large red apple.

He was supremely happy because he had something to give to the dear Christ Child. Hastening to the altar of the church, he placed the precious apple on the marble hands of the Babe in Mary's arms.

Instantly the tiny fingers closed over it and a smile of heavenly joy swept over the chubby face.

This happened long, long ago, but the people in the vicinity still give to Christ through his poor at Christmas time, believing that the gift bestowed upon "one of the least of these" is received by the Christ Child himself, and rewarded by the same blessed smile which brought joy and comfort to the little clockmaker.

THE MISTLETOE.

With Christmas cheer the hall is bright. At friendly feud with winter's cold; There's many a merry game tonight.

For maids and men, and young and old; And winter sends for their delight The holly with its crimson glow.

And paler than the glistening snow The mistletoe, the mistletoe! The mistletoe, the mistletoe!

The wan and wanton mistletoe! Chance comes to our festal eves, Dear crimson breasted holly sprite! Thee, Robin, too, the hall receives.

Unbidden, whom our hearts invite, And, perched among the crumpled leaves, He cocks his head and sings "Hullo!" The mistletoe, the mistletoe!

Hangs up above, but what's below? Oh, what's below the mistletoe? The mistletoe, the mistletoe!

A kindly custom sanctions bliss That's 'a'en beneath the wanton bough. Who laughs so low? Why, here it is! Look, Jenny, where I have you now!

Dear bashful eyes, sweet lips—a kiss! Ah, cheeks can mock the holly's glow! For what's below the mistletoe? Ah, ha! Why, it is Cupid O!

Ah, ha! Below the mistletoe 'Tis Cupid O, 'tis Cupid O! —Temple Bar.

Santa In the City.

Santa Claus touched the button which summoned his foreman.

"Yes, sir," said the foreman, coming in from the shop.

"What are you working on?"

"Doll flats, sir."

Santa Claus turned in his chair and regarded his foreman doubtfully.

"Doll flats?" he exclaimed. "You mean doll houses."

"No, sir," the foreman answered. "These are for city distribution, where the children don't know anything about houses."—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

What They Did

To Santa Claus

The children came down with a cheer and the old lady.

Their curly locks gleaming in auburn and gold They ran with delight where the gifts were displayed.

And, oh, such a babble of gladness they made! They gazed on the tree with its glory of light.

Its tinkles and baubles and ornaments bright. They emptied their stockings and, dancing with glee,

Brought back the dear child world to mamma and me. There were dolls with bright faces and books full of song,

Tin trumpets and drums, blocks and bon-bons a throng, And there by the chimney, with arms full of toys,

Stood Santa Claus watching the girls and the boys. They spied him—they rushed with a volley of cheers;

They pulled off the wig that curled white round his ears; They poked at his eyes, gave his whiskers a twist,

And laughed at the shape of his chubby, fat fist. They tore off his coat, rolled him over the floor,

Jumped on his legs, banged his head against the door, Pulled his nose till it cracked, pinched his cheeks with a vim,

And laughed till the tears made their bright eyes grow dim. Then he burst with a thud, and again rang their shout.

On, on went the wild, merry frolic and rout, As they formed in battalions, while each bold brigade

Snowballed with the cotton from which he was made. —Baltimore Sun.

The Charm of Christmas.

There is something in the very season of the year that gives a charm to the festivity of Christmas. In the depth of winter, when Nature lies despoiled of her charms, wrapped in her shroud of sheeted snow, we turn for our gratifications to moral sources. Heart calleth to heart, and we draw our pleasures from the deep wells of living kindness which lie in the quiet recesses of our bosoms.—Washington Irving.

On Christmas eve in Spain the poor man has his relations around him, over his humble "puchero" (stew); the rich man likewise. In Spain only blood relations eat and drink in the house as invited guests on Christmas eve or Christmas day.



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A MERRY CHRISTMAS!

The Christmas Spirit Is the Spirit of giving; the sense of doing for others to whom we want to give pleasure.

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Relieved.

Sultor—Mr. Shimpkins, I have courted your daughter for fifteen years, Mr. S.—Well, what do you want? Sultor—To marry her. Mr. S.—Well, I'm dashed! I thought you wanted a pension or something.—New York Globe.

Cautious.

"What's a' yer hurry, Sandy? It's no 10 o'clock yet." "Well, ye see, Ah've changed me lodgin's, an' Ah'm no vera weel acquainted wi' the new staircase."—London Bystander.

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